

# GET THE BUGS OUT — THE LOW-RISK WAY

The City of San Diego Household Hazardous Materials Program

Few things bug homeowners like bugs do! And few things seem to frustrate San Diego homemakers more than finding the “right” or “best” way to get rid of those pesky crawling, flying, menacing insects in your home. This frustration may cause homeowners to over-react in their fight against pests. Emptying the *entire* can of pest spray on a single roach is not the answer, since it increases human exposure to toxic chemicals.

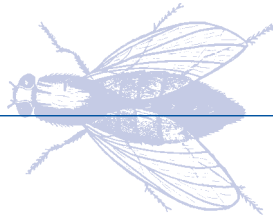
People often use pesticides indoors without particular regard for the proper amount, timing or safety precautions. Various indoor pesticides can be used safely and effectively when following the directions on the container. However, non-toxic methods and products can often be used instead.

By heeding a few simple guidelines and using some old-fashioned common sense, you can become a smarter “home environmentalist,” and wipe out ticks and fleas at the same time.

## The “Safer Alternatives” Approach

The “Safer Alternatives” approach is to use preventive methods first. Such methods often eliminate the need for pesticides, save money and maintain a healthier home environment. However, in those cases when more drastic action is called for, use the least toxic chemical methods available.

Household insects usually become a problem when we create an environment that fills their need for three things: food, water and places to hide. Thus, keeping your living space clean, dry and free of excess clutter is a very effective way to fight bugs. Other prevention steps and control methods are effective for specific types of pests. The following chart gives some tips to make you a better home environmentalist:

PEST	PREVENTION	MONITORING	LEAST TOXIC CONTROL
Roaches Silverfish Food bugs	Caulk cracks, crevices; clean out storage areas; eliminate food sources; fix water leaks	Use non-toxic roach traps; inspect regularly	Put boric acid in non-food areas (toxic by mouth: keep away from children)
Ants	Same as above; wipe counters with water/vinegar solution; control ants outside; spray nesting areas with insecticidal soap or pyrethrin sprays	Inspect visually	Mop up ants and drown them; use boric acid; put down sticky barriers; dust ant trails with baby powder
Flies	Put screens on doors and windows; use good general sanitation		Use a fly swatter, fly paper or adhesive pest strips
Termites	Consult professional exterminator	Inspect visually for signs of infestation (cellulose droppings)	Consult professionals about using electrogun or cold treatments
Clothes moths	Clean and store wool clothes carefully; wash before storing; pack in well-sealed plastic	Inspect visually for signs of infestation	Store clothes with sachets of cedar chips
Fleas	Vacuum your house often; dispose of vacuum bag frequently; use good pet nutrition and grooming; use herbal dips and flea collars on pets (discontinue if skin irritation is noted)	Inspect visually, especially when pet is scratching	For indoor pets, use <i>d</i> -limonene or pyrethrins in powder or spray form; consult veterinarian or pet store experts; for outdoor pets, use insecticidal soap products

## Identifying Hazardous Household Materials

**H**azardous products are those labeled DANGER, WARNING, CAUTION, POISON, TOXIC, FLAMMABLE, CORROSIVE, REACTIVE, EXPLOSIVE or with similar words. Such materials add convenience to our lifestyle and make work easier. Household hazardous wastes are the “leftovers” of these products, which must be discarded. Protect yourself and your family from accidents by carefully reading and following label directions. Store hazardous materials in a



safe, well-ventilated place away from open flames and out of the reach of children. You can limit this waste by choosing the right products and buying only the amount you need. Then, what little may be left over can be thrown away properly at a citywide household hazardous waste collection event.

Improper disposal of hazardous and toxic wastes produces a very real threat to individuals and the environment. Toxic materials or waste poured down a drain or into a sewer can reach and damage precious waterways, including the ocean. Hazardous wastes cannot be discarded in the trash, as they can harm refuse collectors and cause landfill and groundwater pollution.

### THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

NO. 5 OF A SERIES



GET THE  
BUGS OUT —  
THE LOW-RISK WAY

The City of San Diego Household Hazardous Materials Program

**H**ousehold Hazardous Materials  
Program Hotline..... 235-2111  
(All other areas)..... 1-(800) 246-1233  
Used Oil Infoline..... 235-2105  
Recycling Hotline: Paper, Glass, Cans..... 467-0903  
(All other areas)..... 1-(800) 237-2583  
Paint for Graffiti Removal  
Paint Exchange Bank..... 527-3431  
(All other areas)..... 1-(800) 246-1233

The City of San Diego  
Household Hazardous Materials Program  
450 A Street, Suite 500  
San Diego, CA 92101

## Proper Disposal Of Chemical Pesticides

**T**hrowing leftover pesticides and other household hazardous wastes in the trash can endanger the environment and refuse collectors - and it's against the law! Take household hazardous wastes, including pesticides, to a citywide household hazardous waste collection event. To minimize hazardous waste, use non-toxic pest control whenever possible. If you choose a commercial pesticide, buy only what you need and use up all that you buy. To transport waste to a collection event, leave all products in their original containers. **Do not mix them together.** Make sure they are properly sealed and will not leak. You may bring up to five gallons or 50 pounds of waste at any one time. Use your best judgment to estimate this amount. For information on collection events, call the Household Hazardous Materials Program Hotline at **235-2111**. For information on used oil recycling options, call the Used Oil Infoline at **235-2105**.

Sponsored by

The City of San Diego Environmental Services and  
Metropolitan Wastewater Departments and the  
California Integrated Waste Management Board.



### Health Information



Emergencies..... 911  
Poison Control Center..... 543-6000  
Indoor Air Pollution:  
American Lung Association..... 297-3901

### Reporting Hazards

Air Emissions:  
Air Pollution Control District..... 694-3340  
Oil-Burning, Smoking Vehicles..... 1-(800)-28-SMOKE

Illegal dumping of hazardous waste:  
County Dept. of Environmental Health..... 338-2284  
Storm Water Pollution Hotline..... 533-3793

Pesticides:  
County Agricultural Commissioner..... 694-2739  
Internet: [www.sannet.gov/environmental-services/](http://www.sannet.gov/environmental-services/)

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT #2365  
SAN DIEGO CA